

*Concl
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74. (New) The method of claim 73, wherein another selection criterion for determining whether the connection graphs are optimal is the number of bends of the connection graphs.

75. (New) The method of claim 67, wherein the edges are defined based on a wiring model for the IC layout and on a partitioning structure defined by the partitioning lines.

REMARKS

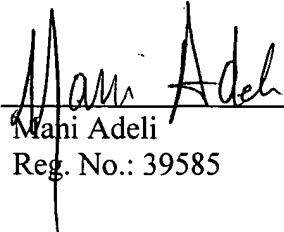
This Preliminary Amendment is concurrently filed with the above-entitled application, which is a continuation application of a presently pending application entitled "Recursive Partitioning Placement Method and Apparatus," filed on December 6, 2000. In this Preliminary Amendment, Applicants have changed the title of this application,

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inserted a reference to the related parent application, canceled claims 1-27, and added claims 28-75. Accordingly, claims 28-75 are currently pending in this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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